

Resolving complaints

We do not act as an advocate for complainants or providers.

Our role is to bring an impartial view to each complaint and work with both parties to achieve a fair resolution.

If our work reveals shortcomings within a particular service, we will discuss a remedy with the provider. If we believe that the service provider was reasonable, we will inform both the complainant and provider.

We will advise the complainant and the provider of the outcome of our work in writing.



For health or disability service complaints, please contact:

Office of Health Review

Telephone: (08) 9323 0600

Freecall: 1800 813 583

Facsimile: (08) 9221 3675

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This brochure is available on audio tape, in Braille or community languages on request.

Interpreting services are available from the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE

OFFICE of HEALTH REVIEW

FOR DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Office of Health Review works closely with disability service providers and consumers to help resolve disputes and achieve fair and positive outcomes when complaints arise.

What is the Office of Health Review?

The Office of Health Review is an independent body that has the power to deal with disability complaints under Part 6 of the Disability Services Act 1993.

When dealing with complaints, we must work in accordance with the principles in Schedule 1 of the Act, and the objectives in Schedule 2 of the Act.

Where organisations are providing disability services specifically for people with disabilities, complaints can be made about:

- a non-government or private organisation
- a public authority
- the Disability Services Commission.

Note: We do not accept matters if they:

- are more than two years old
- have already been decided by a court or tribunal
- are vexatious, trivial or without substance.



What complaints do we deal with?

The Office can deal with complaints that allege a provider has:

- acted unreasonably by not providing a disability service to the complainant
- acted unreasonably in their provision of a disability service
- acted unreasonably by denying or restricting the complainant's access to records kept by the provider
- breached patient confidentiality.

We can assess whether the Disability Services Commission has acted unreasonably in making, or not making, a grant available to the complainant.

How we handle complaints

We will usually seek a response from the service provider after receiving a written complaint from a consumer.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the provider may wish to contact their insurer or other representatives.

A complaint may be resolved early with our assistance, or it may proceed to conciliation or investigation. Wherever possible we handle complaints informally and in a cooperative manner.

We try to bring about a resolution as quickly as we can, although complex issues may take more time to resolve.

Often the fact that the provider openly addresses the complainant's concerns is sufficient in itself to finalise the matter.

Conciliation

The complainant may be given the opportunity to resolve the complaint through conciliation, which is voluntary. The law protects anything said or admitted during conciliation and is strictly confidential.

Investigation

Under the Disability Services Act 1993 we must investigate a complaint if conciliation fails. This involves a thorough review of the complaint.